

USAID/Benin
Operational Plan

FY 2006

June 2, 2006

Please Note:

The attached RESULTS INFORMATION is from the FY 2006 Operational Plan and was assembled and analyzed by the country or USAID operating unit identified on the cover page.

The Operational Plan is a "pre-decisional" USAID document and does not reflect results stemming from formal USAID review(s) of this document.

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Program Performance Summary FY 2005: USAID's program supports Benin's continued progress toward democracy and sustainable growth, while reducing poverty and dependency on foreign aid. Factors which could hinder Benin's ability to achieve these successes include the low status of women, high rates of illiteracy, slow pace of economic reforms, weaknesses in government management, and limitations in quality or access to services in family health and basic education. Benin has a strong tradition of centralized authority and a lack of effective checks and balances. This contributes to the country's pervasive corruption.

USAID is addressing these challenges by working with the Government of Benin to improve the primary education system, introduce effective interventions to improve family health, and reinforce governance in productive and social sectors. USAID programs include activities which contribute to women's and girls' empowerment, support decentralization of government authority and encourage communities to play a strong role in ensuring that health and education services are well managed. USAID programs include a specific focus on combating trafficking in persons, improving women's legal rights, and combating corruption. Assistance under the P.L. 480 Title II program was closely tied to USAID's development assistance program, particularly in the areas of health (maternal and child nutrition, as well as assistance to persons living with HIV/AIDS), primary education, and assistance to women in rural areas with a focus on micro-credit and training in literacy, numeracy and other basic business management skills.

Challenges:

During the past 15 years, Benin has established a fundamental consensus on the key elements of democratic liberties and put in place the major institutions for a democratic government. Municipal elections in 2002 were an important step in enabling greater local participation in the nation's governance and development. Presidential elections in March 2006 will mark a milestone in Benin's political evolution. A constitutionally-mandated age limit prevents President Mathieu Kérékou and former President, Nicéphore Soglo from running for office. This has left the political field open to a change in regime. A chief challenge to the evolution of Benin's democratic system will be to counterbalance a strong tradition of centralized authority. The state, especially the executive branch, exerts a strong influence over much of the country's economic and political activity. More emphasis is needed to encourage decentralization and involvement of civil society. This in turn will help to reinforce a climate of transparency and accountability and to ensure that community priorities are addressed in development planning.

Benin is a young country with a growing urban population. Nearly 45 percent of its 6.9 million inhabitants are under the age of 15. Over 44 percent of the population lives in urban areas, nearly double the proportion of twenty years ago. The country's health and education status are among the lowest in the world. Life expectancy is 54 years. Sixty-six percent of adults (aged 15 and above) are illiterate. An estimated 29% of the population lives below the national poverty line.

Benin also faces significant challenges to maintaining economic growth and ensuring that all of its people benefit from it. Encouraging private sector growth and investment is critical. Benin's economic base must become more diversified and less tied to the "twin engines" of services and agriculture which together account for 85% of economic activity. Cotton production is a mainstay of the economy--over a quarter of the population depends on it for their livelihood and a significant portion of government revenue is derived from cotton export tariffs. In order to adequately meet the education and health needs of its growing population, Benin must increase and diversify its sources of revenues.

Key achievements:

Education: Over the past 15 years Benin has made strides in the overall improvement of the education system with assistance from USAID and other donors. The gross primary school enrollment rate increased from 73% in 1997 to 97% in 2005. The girls' gross enrollment rate increased from 56% in 1997 to 86% in 2005. A new competency-based curriculum for the primary school system has been introduced which places greater emphasis on analysis and critical thinking compared to rote memorization. The new curriculum is now being used nationwide in all primary school grades. Training and advocacy activities have increased awareness of the need to send girls to school. HIV/AIDS education has been included in teacher and parent training activities and in student textbooks. Africa Education Initiative resources were used to train teachers, develop supplemental education materials for first grade children, and provide

scholarships to more than 900 girls through the Ambassadors Girls Scholarship Program. P.L. 480 Title II resources funded school canteen programs in 39 schools and provided almost 2 million meals in northern Benin.

In FY 2005, USAID's education program in Benin focused on improving access to a quality basic education, especially for girls. USAID assisted the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education to complete the implementation of the new competency-based curricula in the primary school system. This year the curriculum was extended to grade six. USAID engaged approximately 35 mothers' associations in the effort to promote girls' education, resulting in over 300 initiatives. USAID-funded peer-tutoring activities have decreased girls' dropout rates by 76% in two target zones.

Family Health: When USAID launched its health program nearly a decade ago, the Ministry of Public Health was moving from a traditionally highly-centralized bureaucracy to decentralized management. The Ministry faced formidable challenges to improve health status and health care. The utilization of public sector clinics was low and traditional healers provided much of the health care. Health care coverage in the northern regions was not adequate. As a result, the poor health status of the Beninese population was especially pronounced in these remote, disadvantaged areas. Nationally maternal mortality was high at 498 deaths per 100,000 live births and the average Beninese woman would have between six and seven children in her lifetime. The infant and childhood mortality rates were 94 and 167 deaths per 1,000 live births respectively. While these health statistics are only slowly improving, the partnership among the Ministry of Public Health, USAID and other donors is making progress in improving the quality of family health services. USAID's community based interventions are beginning to have an impact on improving maternal and child health and nutrition, eradication of polio and malaria, family planning, and prevention of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections.

In FY 2005 the USAID program has achieved notable improvements in behaviors to protect health and in the use of family health products. Sales of socially marketed family planning products have continued to increase, and contraceptive prevalence in USAID target zones is rising. Sales of insecticide treated bed nets and bed net re-treatment kits under USAID's social marketing program have fallen short of targets due to competition from lower-priced products available in the public sector. USAID is working with the Ministry of Public Health to determine mechanisms which are better suited to distributing nets through the public sector and ways to reposition social marketing activities aimed at preventing malaria. FY 2005 results also demonstrate significant improvements in health practices such as proper treatment of diarrhea and fever in children. Heightened awareness about sexually transmitted infections and increased safe sexual practices will help to slow the spread of HIV/AIDS, especially among adolescents. A low-cost intervention to manage the third stage of labor in childbirth has been introduced in pilot sites and plans are underway to introduce this throughout the country. This will help prevent post-partum hemorrhage, a leading cause of maternal deaths. Benin is on the verge of eradicating polio. The National Malaria Control Program is achieving significant results in increasing the number of children and pregnant women who sleep under an insecticide treated bed net.

Good Governance: USAID promotes good governance in the social and economic sectors by providing training and technical assistance to local governments, non-governmental organizations and community groups. The major focus for USAID's interventions includes supporting decentralization and devolution of authorities to local communities; promoting greater transparency and accountability in government management and combating trafficking in children; improving the productivity of producers and traders; and working with microfinance institutions to improve the services and products they offer to their clients.

In FY 2005, USAID's anti-corruption program was tied in with a successful decentralization support activity which provides small grants and technical assistance to community groups to ensure that local development initiatives are managed with greater transparency and accountability. Supreme Audit Institutions such as the Inspector General of Finance and the Chamber of Accounts of the Supreme Court continued to conduct qualitative audits and assessments and to actively participate in the implementation of the government anticorruption action plan. They also conducted audits that ultimately substantiated allegations of corruption made by civil society groups. USAID launched a program to improve access of producer and trader groups to market information and business development systems. This is part of a

broader regional activity to promote trade in targeted commodities throughout the region. USAID training and technical assistance has strengthened a network of microfinance institutions which have expanded their services and product range to a growing number of clients.

USAID has worked closely with the Government of Benin and donors to raise Benin's ranking on the US State Department's Trafficking in Persons report. Major efforts have focused on encouraging the Government of Benin to enact legislation against child trafficking. The Constitutional Court has reviewed the draft law and sent it to the National Assembly to be enacted. The US and other donors have been working as well to encourage the Government of Benin to improve efforts to gather information on the scope of child trafficking, arrests and prosecutions.

USAID has also launched a program to improve access of producer and trader groups to market information systems and to increase trade in targeted commodities and to improve food security within the West African sub-region. USAID assistance to the microfinance sector has helped strengthen the government regulatory unit which oversees the sector. Training and technical assistance has strengthened a network of microfinance institutions which have expanded their services and product range to a growing number of clients.

Gender: USAID has made gender a strong cross-cutting dimension of its development program in Benin. Special emphasis is placed on girls' education and encouraging mothers to become more involved in creating an environment which supports girls' attendance and success at school. A centrally-funded USAID activity managed from Washington is successfully raising awareness about women's legal rights and the protection afforded to them under a forward-looking Family Code which was passed in 2004. USAID is also working to promote enactment of legislation which will ban sexual harassment, a key factor in preventing families from sending girls on to secondary school.

Anti-Corruption and Support for Decentralization: USAID links a strong emphasis on decentralization and anti-corruption to its efforts to promote civil society involvement in local development initiatives. This helps ensure that community priorities are addressed and that planning and implementation is conducted transparently and accountably.

FY 2006 Program

SO: 680-004 Ensure that a Quality Basic Education is More Widely Available on an Equitable Basis

Achieve Equitable Access to Quality Basic Education

Achieve Equitable Access to Quality Basic Education (\$4,607,000 DA). USAID is providing technical assistance to the Government of Benin as it re-opens teacher training institutions. This includes developing teaching guides and providing materials and equipment. USAID is also introducing a model for in-service teacher training to new target areas. USAID is assisting the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education to revise curricula in primary school grades. USAID is supporting interventions to raise awareness about the importance of girls' education, such as peer tutoring programs. USAID is also working with local and national authorities to develop policies aimed at promoting girls' education, for example encouraging the recruitment and retention of female teachers to serve as role models for girls in remote rural areas. With AEI resources USAID is training school district leaders, teacher supervisors, and primary school teachers in planning techniques, teaching approaches, and strategies for effectively teaching the new primary education curriculum. AEI resources are also being used to finance primary education for girls' under the Ambassadors Girls Scholarship Program. Principal contractors/grantees: International Foundation for Education and Self-Help (IFESH), and other organizations to be determined.

Protect and Increase Food Security of Vulnerable Populations

P.L. 480 Title II resources are being used to assist communities in northern Benin to establish and operate school canteens. Principal contractor/grantee: Catholic Relief Services.

Protect Human Rights

USAID funded activities sensitize community members, local leaders, judges and other actors in the judicial system about women's rights and potential contribution to the well-being of their families and the development of Benin. Activities include public awareness campaigns, paralegal training, distribution of simplified summaries of the new Family Code and law banning sexual harassment, workshops for community leaders, and building capacity of non-governmental organizations to carry on this work. USAID activities also include a strong emphasis on promoting girls' education and protecting the rights of children. Principal contractors/grantees: To be determined.

Reduce Trafficking In Persons

Reduce Trafficking In Persons (\$0). USAID is funding an expansion of anti-child trafficking interventions into northern Benin. USAID activities also strengthen the field supervisory capacity of the Ministry of Family. This includes assisting the centers for social protection in raising awareness on children's rights and the negative impact of trafficking on families, schools, and communities. The activity is also supporting the establishment of community referral mechanisms and partnerships; improvement of policy and coordination; drafting and enactment of anti-child trafficking legislation; dissemination of information on cases identified at the village or communal level so they can be referred to the relevant authorities or agencies; and assistance in reintegrating children in their communities through school attendance, training in life skills and employment opportunities. Principal contractors/grantees: UNICEF.

Reduce Transmission & Impact Of HIV/AIDS

Reduce Transmission & Impact Of HIV/AIDS (\$450,000 DA). USAID is providing HIV/AIDS awareness training to parents, students, teachers and education officials along with assistance to the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education to implement an education sector policy on HIV/AIDS and to

incorporate HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention messages in school materials. Principal contractors/grantees: To be determined.

Strengthen Civil Society

Strengthen Civil Society (\$1,020,000 DA). USAID is continuing to strengthen the capacity of communities and parents as key actors in primary education. USAID is supporting public awareness activities to engage communities in the education reform agenda. Parents located in rural areas with limited education are benefiting from training to help them understand the reform program and approaches they can use to remain active in their children's education. Principal contractors/grantees: To be determined.

FY 2007 Program

SO: 680-004 Ensure that a Quality Basic Education is More Widely Available on an Equitable Basis

Achieve Equitable Access to Quality Basic Education

Achieve Equitable Access to Quality Basic Education (\$2,327,000 DA). USAID will continue providing financial and technical assistance to MEPS to improve teaching quality with activities targeting newly opened teacher training centers. USAID will continue activities to promote HIV/AIDS awareness. Principal contractors/grantees: To be determined.

Protect Human Rights

Protect Human Rights (\$0). USAID will continue activities to raise awareness about women's rights. USAID activities will continue a strong emphasis on promoting girls' education and protecting the rights of children. Principal contractors/grantees: To be determined.

Reduce Trafficking In Persons

Reduce Trafficking In Persons (\$0): Activities to expand anti-child trafficking interventions into northern Benin will continue with an emphasis on disseminating anti-trafficking legislation, collecting data about the scope of child trafficking and support to improve social services for trafficked children. Principal contractors/grantees: UNICEF.

Reduce Transmission & Impact Of HIV/AIDS

Reduce Transmission & Impact Of HIV/AIDS (\$ 300,000 DA). USAID will continue activities within the primary education system to educate and sensitize parents, students, teachers and education officials on the impact and risks of HIV/AIDS. Principal contractors/grantees: To be determined.

Strengthen Civil Society

Strengthen Civil Society (\$900,000 DA). USAID will continue working with civil society, especially mothers' associations to improve community oversight in school management. Principal contractors/grantees: To be determined.

FY 2006 Program

SO: 680-005 Expand the Use of Family Health Services, Products, and Preventive Measures within a Supportive Policy Environment

Improve Child Survival, Health & Nutrition

Improve Child Survival, Health & Nutrition (\$775,000 CSH). USAID is working with the Ministry of Public Health to develop protocols and standards for family health and introduce them nationwide. This includes conducting training in family health standards related to interventions such as managing childhood illnesses and caring for newborns. Local officials are receiving in managing health activities. A model for bottom-up planning in which local conditions and community needs are reflected in health planning is being expanded to other geographic areas. USAID is funding social marketing activities to promote the use of oral rehydration salts for treating diarrhea. A pilot to establish community health insurance schemes is being expanded to new target areas. USAID is also supporting polio eradication activities in Benin. Principal contractors/grantees: To be determined.

Improve Maternal Health & Nutrition

Improve Maternal Health & Nutrition (\$775,000 CSH). USAID is expanding achievements under a previous activity to protect the health of mothers by preventing post partum hemorrhage and promoting safe pregnancy as part of a package of integrated family health services. Principal contractors/grantees: To be determined.

Prevent & Control Infectious Diseases Of Major Importance

Prevent & Control Infectious Diseases Of Major Importance (\$1,500,000 CSH). USAID is continuing to promote the use of insecticide treated nets under a social marketing program. The Ministry of Public Health will continue to receive USAID technical assistance in rolling out its malaria control strategy nationwide, and introducing new approaches to combat malaria which are recommended by the World Health organization. Principal contractors/grantees: To be determined.

Reduce Transmission & Impact Of HIV/AIDS

Reduce Transmission & Impact Of HIV/AIDS (\$2,000,000 CSH). USAID is continuing support for the campaigns to promote delay of sexual debut among adolescents, sexual abstinence and fidelity as well as promotion of condom use through a social marketing program. USAID is continuing support focused on improving epidemiological surveillance, reinforcing prevention and case management of sexually transmitted infections through training and supervision, and through targeted educational programs for vulnerable groups. Principal contractors/grantees: To be determined.

Strengthen Civil Society

Strengthen Civil Society (\$0). USAID continues to support the establishment and expansion of community health insurance schemes and promotion of community participation and oversight in health services. USAID is also continuing support of income-generating activities in connection with community health services in order to assure continued access to health services. USAID is providing continued technical assistance to support the transfer of authority and financial resources to decentralized operational units within the Ministry of Public Health. Principal contractors/grantees: To be determined.

Support Family Planning

Support Family Planning (\$2,200,000 CSH). USAID is funding training of health workers in applying family health standards of care; awareness campaigns to support the promotion of contraceptive use nationwide; and development and implementation of a contraceptive security strategy to avoid the many consequences of frequent product stock-outs resulting from poor logistics planning. Principal

contractors/grantees: To be determined.

FY 2007 Program

SO: 680-005 Expand the Use of Family Health Services, Products, and Preventive Measures within a Supportive Policy Environment

Improve Child Survival, Health & Nutrition

Improve Child Survival, Health & Nutrition (\$775,000 CSH). USAID will continue interventions to improve child health as part of an on-going integrated family health program. Principal contractors/grantees: To be determined.

Improve Maternal Health & Nutrition

Improve Maternal Health & Nutrition (\$775,000 CSH). USAID will continue interventions to improve maternal health and nutrition as part of an on-going integrated family health program. Principal contractors/grantees: To be determined.

Prevent & Control Infectious Diseases Of Major Importance

Prevent & Control Infectious Diseases Of Major Importance (\$1,500,000 CSH). Support to the national ITN social marketing program will continue. USAID will continue assisting the Ministry of Health to roll out its malaria control strategy. Principal contractors/grantees: To be determined.

Reduce Transmission & Impact Of HIV/AIDS

Reduce Transmission & Impact Of HIV/AIDS (\$2,000,000 CSH). USAID will continue activities to reduce transmission and impact of HIV/AIDS as part of an on-going program. Principal contractors/grantees: To be determined.

Strengthen Civil Society

Strengthen Civil Society (\$0). USAID will continue to support the establishment and expansion of community health insurance schemes and promotion of community participation and oversight in health services. Principal contractors/grantees: To be determined.

Support Family Planning

Support Family Planning (\$2,200,000 CSH). USAID will continue activities to support family planning as part of an integrated family health program. Principal contractors/grantees: To be determined.

Results Framework

680-001 More Children Receive a Quality Basic Education on an Equitable Basis

Program Title: Reforming Primary Education In Benin

- 1: Improved Pedagogical System
- 2: Increased Girls Enrollment in Target Areas
- 3: Improved Environment for Stakeholders
- 4: Improved Management of the Education System (in the context of decentralization)

680-002 Increased use of family health services and preventive measures in a supportive policy environment

Program Title: Benin Integrated Family Health

- 1: Improved Policy Environment
- 2: Increased Access to Services and Products
- 3: Improved Quality of Services
- 4: Increased Demand for Health Services and Prevention Measures

680-003 Improved governance in productive and social sectors

Program Title: Governance Program

- 1: Participation and management capacities of decentralized stakeholders increased.
- 2: Strengthened mechanisms to promote transparency and accountability
- 3: Improved environment for private and local initiatives

680-004 Ensure that a Quality Basic Education is More Widely Available on an Equitable Basis

Program Title: Support for Basic Education in Benin

680-005 Expand the Use of Family Health Services, Products, and Preventive Measures within a Supportive Policy Environment

Program Title: Benin Integrated Family Health